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# SELLING

## CROP INSURANCE



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
PRODUCTION AND MARKETING ADMINISTRATION  
FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE CORPORATION

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## CONFIDENCE

Successful selling is based on confidence. You can feel completely confident about the merits of crop insurance.

Crop insurance is backed by the Federal Government. It was authorized by Congress to meet a need that has existed since farming first went on a business basis. It gives the farmer the same protection that other businessmen have been able to get through private companies. It protects his investment against risks over which he has no control.

Without this protection, farmers live through each growing and harvesting season with fear in their hearts—the fear of not knowing what damage the weather or insects or disease may do to their crops.

Now you are offering farmers something to take this fear out of farming.

Crop insurance protects the well-being of the farm family, the business of the community, and the stability of agriculture. It assures farmers of something in return for the work and the dollars they put into a crop.

Understand all the features of Federal crop insurance—its breadth of covering, its nonprofit provisions. This understanding will develop selling enthusiasm to go with your confidence.

Crop insurance fills a real need. You are performing a valuable service when you make a sale.

## KNOW YOUR PRODUCT

It's natural for customers to have questions and doubts about what they are buying. Your selling job is to answer those questions and to remove those doubts. You must "know the answers" . . . about the provisions of the insurance contract . . . about the advantages it offers.



Study the contract. Know the regulations as you do an old friend. Be sure you have the answers on—

- What hazards are insured against.
- What period of time is covered.
- How the coverage applies to each farm.
- When and how premiums are paid.
- When and how claims for losses are reported.
- How claims are adjusted.
- How indemnities are paid.

If you understand those points, you'll have a basic qualification for selling . . . confidence based on knowledge.

## THE GOVERNMENT AND CROP INSURANCE

Why is the Federal Government in the insurance business?

Because farming is so big and so risky, few private companies have tried to write all-risk crop insurance. The few that tried it have abandoned their ventures.

Yet farmers need this kind of protection for their business. They are entitled to the same opportunity as other businessmen to insure their investment against uncontrollable hazards.

After studying the problem for many years, the Federal Government developed a plan of crop insurance that was first offered to wheat farmers in 1939. Cotton was added to the program in 1942. No insurance was written in 1944, but the 1945 and 1946 programs cover wheat, cotton, and flax throughout the country and corn and tobacco in selected counties.

The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation is part of the Department of Agriculture. Sales and some of the other field work are handled through the Field Service Branch of the Production and Marketing Administration and through local AAA committees. Reports of losses are made to county AAA offices and adjustments are made by representatives of the Corporation.

## WHY SALESMEN



All forms of insurance must be "sold." People seldom *ask* to buy insurance. Personal contact is the only really successful way to do it. **YOU MUST SEE 'EM TO SIGN 'EM!**

## It Pays to Plan

There are good and poor methods of selling insurance. Which method you use will show up in the size of your commission checks. To help you increase the size of your check, here is some practical advice from agents who have done well selling crop insurance in the past:

*First.* Plan your sales talk. Sit down with paper and pencil. Write out in one-two-three order the horse-sense arguments you want to use to convince your prospects they should buy crop insurance now.

*Second.* Stick to your plan when talking to a prospect. Don't let him sidetrack you into discussing costs before you have explained all the advantages of FCIC protection to him.

*Third.* Don't forget your final objective—to get the contract signed.

## GUIDEPOSTS TO SUCCESS

You've started to talk to your customer about crop insurance. How are you going to proceed?

Before any sale is made, you must convince the customer:



*He needs it*



*Cost reasonable*



*Now is the time*

- That he NEEDS the protection.
- That the COST is reasonable.
- That now is the TIME to buy.

To attain these objectives, you must get him to *agree* with your way of thinking on all three of these things . . . need . . . cost . . . time. Tell him the *advantages* of crop insurance . . . how it assures a crop at time of seeding . . . how it removes fear from his mind during the growing season . . . how it protects his financial reserve when he loses a crop . . . how it takes care of his crop expenses in case of loss.

Next, follow up with *proof* that crop insurance will do these things. The most convincing proof you can offer is to show how crop insurance protected some farmer in the neighborhood . . . how it gave him a return when his crop was wiped out or damaged.

Another method of *proof* is to use pencil and paper to demonstrate with figures how well crop insurance protects the farmer's investment in his crop and makes certain that he'll have something to show for his work when the year is up.

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## Resistance

When the customer raises objections, he lets you know exactly what arguments to use. Clear up his doubts. Come right back at him with the specific advantages of crop insurance which take care of the objections he raises.

One good way to break down sales resistance is to get the prospect to *agree with you* by asking him a question. For example, the clothing salesman asks you: "Isn't this a fine suit? Doesn't it fit you well?" To sell insurance, you say: "Don't you agree that crop insurance will protect your investment in your crop each year?"

By getting the prospect to agree, (1) you make sure of solid progress as you go along with your planned

talk and (2) you get him into the *habit* of agreeing and into the right frame of mind for the moment to close the deal.

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## \$\$\$ GREEN LIGHTS \$\$\$



- **LOOK** for prospects on Main Street, at auctions, and other places where farmers get together.
- **CONTACT** as many prospects as possible. The more you see, the more you sell.
- **LET** the prospect have his say without interrupting him. He'll probably give you a clue for your next selling point.
- **RECALL** past crop losses in the community. Call attention to cases where failure to own crop insurance has hurt farmers.
- **WORD** your sales talk so that the prospect feels he already owns the insurance. "With this insurance, you will get, etc."
- **ANTICIPATE** objections by disposing of them in the early part of your talk. After selling a few contracts, you'll learn which objections come up most frequently.
- **ADVERTISE** that you are selling crop insurance . . . through newspaper ads, movie slides, give-away cards.
- **CONTACT** absentee landlords by mail. Any-one with an interest in a crop is eligible to buy insurance.

## \$\$\$ RED LIGHTS \$\$\$

- DON'T expect farmers to break down your door to sign contracts.
- DON'T argue with a prospect about yields and rates. Arguments always lose sales.
- DON'T rush a man into signing. Farmers resent "high pressure" salesmanship, too.
- DON'T try to sell insurance when the time is inconvenient for the customer . . . when he is anxious to be doing something else.

## GOOD ADVICE

SELL PROTECTION. Remind your prospect that regardless of how good his land is or how well he farms it he may still have a loss. He may be NEXT. Only crop insurance guarantees him a return.

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FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE IS NON-PROFIT. The rates are set to cover only the losses that may occur, plus a small safety reserve. The Government pays the commissions and operating expenses.

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CROP INSURANCE IS NOT A PROFIT-MAKING PROPOSITION. A farmer doesn't buy fire insurance on his barn with the hope of collecting on it. No one takes out insurance because he wants to collect.

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CROP INSURANCE PREMIUMS ARE DEDUCTIBLE from gross taxable income when the farmer makes out his Federal income-tax return. Premiums are classified as a farm operating expense.

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BEFORE YOU SEE A PROSPECT, pick out the selling points most likely to appeal to him individually. And direct some of your sales talk to the wives. Women have considerable to say about how the family money is spent.